

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace the section heading on page 1, line 31 with the following amended section heading:

**DISCLOSURE SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

Please replace paragraph [0019] with the following amended paragraph:

[0019] Fig. 1 is a view showing an embodiment of an apparatus for outputting a laser beam according to the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a top view of a microoptical element of Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a sectional view of the microoptical element taken along the lines I-I of Fig. 2; and

Figs. 4A to 4H are views ~~explaining~~ illustrating the operation of the microoptical element of Fig. 1.

Please replace the section heading on page 4, line 28 with the following amended section heading:

**BEST-MODE-FOR-CARRYING-OUT DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION**

Please replace paragraph [0021] with the following amended paragraph:

[0021] Fig. 2 is a top view of a microoptical element 3 of Fig. 1, and Fig. 3 is a sectional view of ~~the~~ microoptical element 3 taken along the lines I-I of Fig. 2. The microoptical element comprises: a substrate 11 having a relatively thin and flexible sheet section 11a and a peripheral section 11b surrounding the sheet section 11a, the peripheral section 11b being relatively rigid and thicker than the sheet section 11a; a lower electrode 12 as the first electrode arranged on the sheet section 11a; a piezoelectric/electrostrictive layer 13 arranged on the lower electrode 12; an upper electrode 14 as the second electrode arranged on the piezoelectric/electrostrictive layer 13, the upper electrode 14 being

capable of applying an electric field to the piezoelectric/electrostrictive layer 13 in cooperation with the lower electrode 12; and a reflective layer 15 arranged on the upper electrode 14 and reflecting the beam to a direction of the polygon mirror 4.

**Please replace paragraph [0023] with the following amended paragraph:**

[0023] Preferably, the substrate 11 is composed of a heat-resistant, chemically ~~stable~~ stable and insulating material because a joint of at least one of the lower electrode 12, the piezoelectric/electrostrictive layer 13 and the upper electrode 14 may be performed by a thermal treatment without an adhesive as described below and a condition at a ~~remarkable~~ remarkably high temperature may be occur, especially when reflecting the beam.

**Please replace paragraph [0024] with the following amended paragraph:**

[0024] In view of above-mentioned situation, it is preferable to use a ~~ceramics~~ ceramic as a material of the substrate 11. Such a ~~ceramics~~ ceramic includes, for example, stabilized zirconium oxide, aluminum oxide, magnesium oxide, titanium oxide, mullite, aluminum nitride, silicon nitride, glass, or the like. Among them, it is more preferable to use the stabilized zirconium oxide because it is possible to maintain relatively high mechanical strength even if the sheet section 11a has a relatively small thickness by the stabilized zirconium, and the stabilized zirconium oxide has an excellent toughness.

**Please replace paragraph [0034] with the following amended paragraph:**

[0034] As a material ~~composed of~~ for the upper electrode 14, a conductive material exhibiting a good joining property to the piezoelectric/ electrostrictive layer 13 is used. Concretely, silver, gold, copper or alloy thereof is used. The upper electrode 14 may be formed by a method similar to the method of forming the lower electrode 12.